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EUROPEAN LANGUAGE EQUALITY

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The European Language Equality Project

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18th EFNIL Conference, Cavtat, Croatia – Fri 8th October, 2021

Interreg POCTEFA LINGUATEC

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Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
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HOST INSTITUTION
DCU Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University

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European Union European Regional Development Fund
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ELE: Summary of main points

Consortium: 52 partners from all over Europe

Coordinator: ADAPT Centre (DCU)

Objective: *development of a strategic research, innovation and deployment agenda and a roadmap to achieve digital language equality in Europe by 2030*

Runtime: 18 months – ELE and ELG will both end in June 2022

Start Date: 1st January 2021

Context: “Language Equality” EP Resolution

EP Resolution “Language equality in the digital age”
P8_TA(2018)0332 – partially based on the STOA study

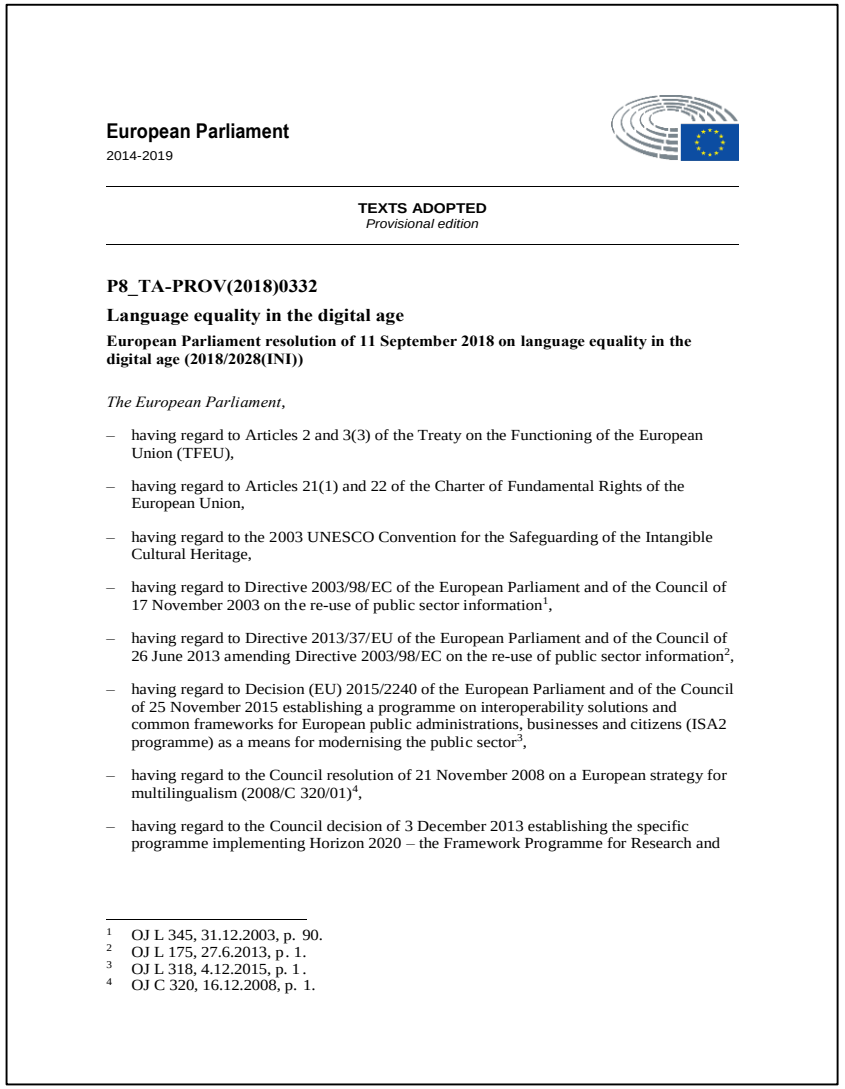
Voting (11 Sept. 2018): **592 yes** – 45 no

Selected Recommendations addressed by ELE:

25. Establish a large-scale, long-term coordinated funding programme for research, development and innovation in the field of language technologies, at European, national and regional levels, tailored specifically to Europe’s needs and demands

29. Create a European LT platform for sharing of services

27. Europe has to secure its leadership in language-centric AI



European Parliament
2014-2019

TEXTS ADOPTED
Provisional edition

P8_TA-PROV(2018)0332

Language equality in the digital age

European Parliament resolution of 11 September 2018 on language equality in the digital age (2018/2028(INI))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to Articles 2 and 3(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),

– having regard to Articles 21(1) and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,

– having regard to the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage,

– having regard to Directive 2003/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 November 2003 on the re-use of public sector information[1],

– having regard to Directive 2013/37/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 amending Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information[2],

– having regard to Decision (EU) 2015/2240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 establishing a programme on interoperability solutions and common frameworks for European public administrations, businesses and citizens (ISA2 programme) as a means for modernising the public sector[3],

– having regard to the Council resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism (2008/C 320/01)[4],

– having regard to the Council decision of 3 December 2013 establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and

1 OJ L 345, 31.12.2003, p. 90.
2 OJ L 175, 27.6.2013, p. 1.
3 OJ L 318, 4.12.2015, p. 1.
4 OJ C 320, 16.12.2008, p. 1.

LANGEQ-2020 Call

- **Developing a strategic research, innovation and implementation agenda and a roadmap for achieving full digital language equality in Europe by 2030**
- Funding line: PP/PA (not Horizon 2020) – Pilot Project/ Preparatory Action
- Project type: Coordination and Support Action
- Submission deadline: 29th July 2020
- Max. runtime: 18 months
- Budget: €1.8M

LANGEQ-2020 Call: Three main components

Draw up **sustainable evidence-based strategic research agenda** and **roadmap** setting out **actions**, **processes**, **tools** and **actors** to *achieve full digital language equality of all languages* (official or otherwise) used within the EU through the effective use of LT.

1. **Agenda**: lay out current state of LT and language equality within the EU and give detailed picture of the situation needed to achieve DLE.
2. **Roadmap**: provide path and requirements for implementing the agenda and ensure that DLE becomes a reality by 2030.
3. **Dissemination** and awareness raising: events, consultations, social media etc.

European Language Equality: Positioning

- ELE has some of its roots in META-NET plus strong collaboration with ELG
  - Focus on strategy agenda and roadmap over next 18 months
- ELE has the potential to influence the European LT landscape for the next 10-15 years:
  - Address and solve the crucial topic of DLE, i.e. when under-resourced languages no longer exist
  - Create more public visibility: for the topic, LT community, and the consortium,
  - Strengthen and reinforce the ELG
  - Strengthen the relationship of our field with the European AI community
  - Help establish LT & language-centric AI in Horizon Europe and Digital Europe Programme
- ELE and ELG are aligned so that they both end in June 2022 with a large joint event:

European Language Equality: Concept

- Key goal: development of the strategic agenda and roadmap
- Input to be prepared by the project and collected from all relevant stakeholders
- Close collaboration between ELE & ELG
  - Integration of (almost) all ELG NCCs and the ELG Language Technology Council (LTC)
  - Make use of ELG platform for various tasks in ELE
- Update META-NET White Papers
- Organisation of events, consultations, surveys
- Large, all-encompassing consortium: 52 partners from industry, research and many different pan-European networks, initiatives and associations

European Language Equality: Concept

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- Update…
- Organisat…
- Large, all-en… …from industry, research and ma… …etworks, initiatives and associations

ELE is *not* about implementation or research.

Rather, it is a preparation project to develop a convincing agenda and roadmap, endorsed by as many relevant stakeholders as possible, representing the whole field

ELE Consortium

- **5 core partners:** ADAPT@DCU, DFKI, Charles University, ILSP, University of the Basque Country
- **9 networks, associations, initiatives:** LT Innovate (via Crosslang), EFNIL, ELEN, ECSPM, CLARIN, CLAIRE (via University of Leiden), NEM (via Eurescom), LIBER, Wikimedia
- **9 companies:** Tilde, ELDA, Expert System, Sail Labs, Kantan MT (via Xcelerator MT), Pangeanic, Semantic Web Company, Ontotext (via Sirma AI), SAP
- **29 research organisations:** University of Vienna, University of Antwerp, Institute for Bulgarian Language, University of Zagreb, University of Copenhagen, University of Tartu, University of Helsinki, CNRS, Research Institute for Linguistics, Institute for Icelandic Studies, FBK, University of Latvia, Institute of the Lithuanian Language, Luxembourg Institute of Technology, University of Malta, Instituut voor de Nederlandse Taal, Language Council of Norway, Polish Academy of Sciences, University of Lisbon, Romanian Academy, University of Cyprus, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Jozef Stefan Institute, Barcelona Supercomputing Center, Royal Institute of Technology, University of Zurich, University of Sheffield, University of Vigo, Bangor University

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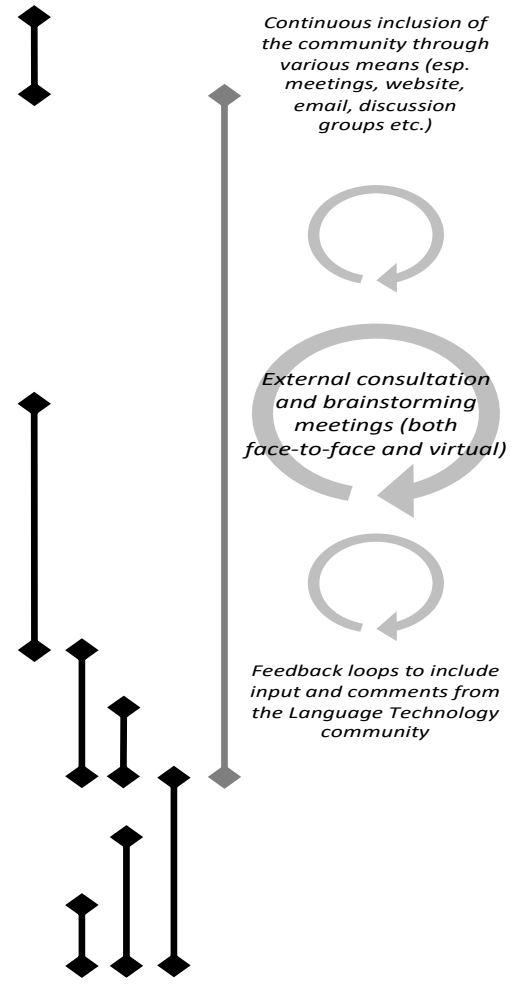
ELE: Approach

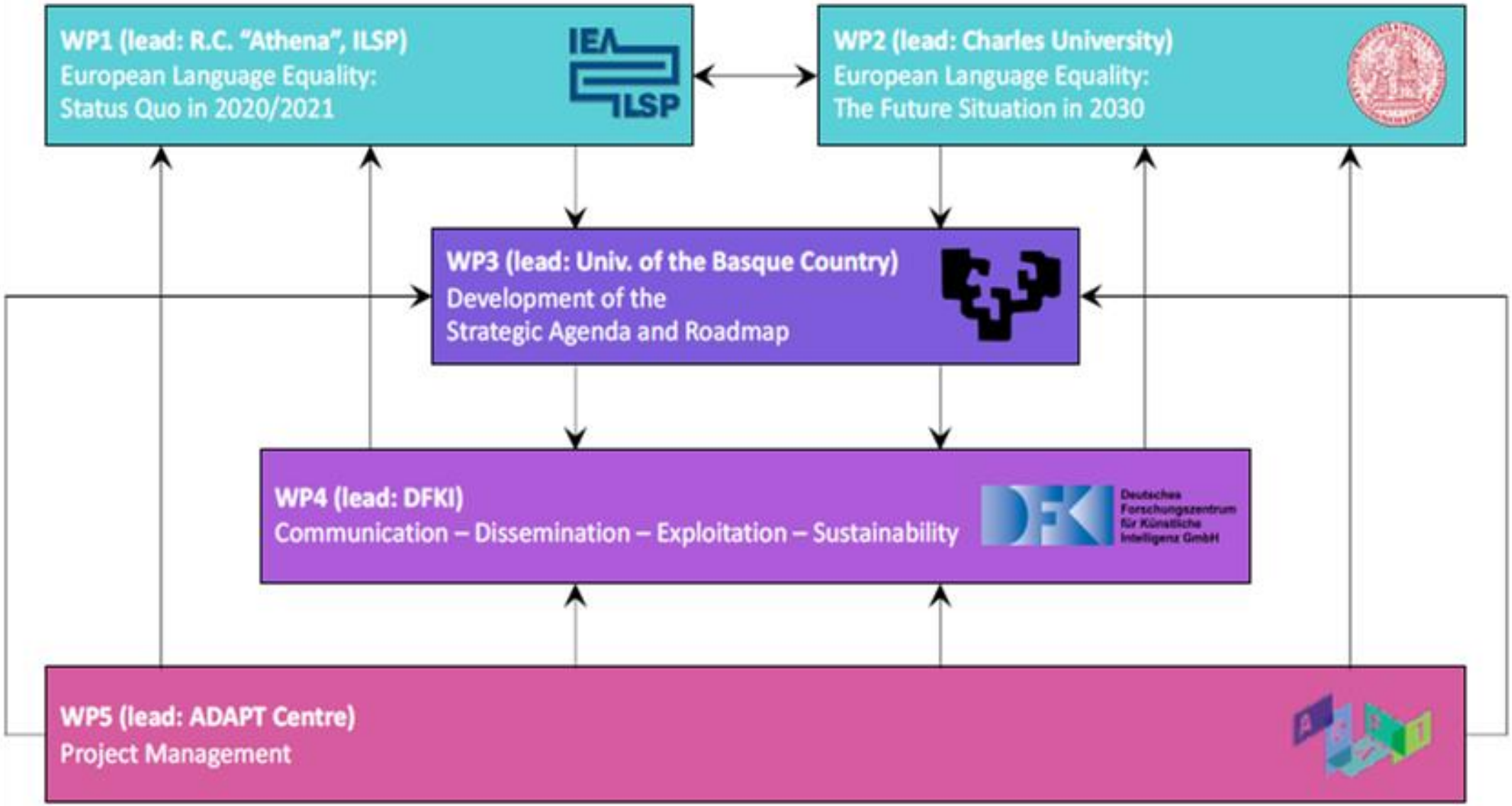
- Main result: Strategic Agenda and Roadmap – all deliverables provide input for this main report: detailed description of the *European Language Equality Programme*
- Research partners to produce updates of 32 META-NET White Papers (one deliverable each)
- Networks and initiatives to produce a report (one deliverable each) in which they collect, consolidate and present their own position, requirements, visions etc.
- Companies to produce various technical deep dives for the different technology areas.
- Additional reports to be produced, primarily by the core partners.
- Reports to be prepared fairly autonomously based on many different public consultation meetings, roundtables, online surveys etc.
- Reports to be used as input for the strategic agenda and roadmap
- Min. total number of languages taken into account in ELE: **77**

ELE Timeline

Start of the ELE project	M1	ELE kick-off meeting
	M2	
Digital collaboration and document management infrastructure (D5.1)	M3	Digital Language Equality – preliminary definition (D1.1) Promotional materials and PR package (D4.1); project infrastructure (D5.1)
	M4	Specification of the consultation process including templates, surveys, events etc. (D2.1)
	M5	
	M6	Communication and dissemination plan (D4.2)
	M7	
	M8	
Project mgmt. report (D5.2)	M9	Report on the state of the art in Language Technology and Language-centric AI (D1.2)
	M10	
	M11	
	M12	
	M13	Digital Language Equality – full specification of the concept (D1.3)
	M14	Reports on 32 European languages (D1.4-D1.35) Reports from relevant European initiatives (D2.2-D2.12); technology deep dives (D2.13-D2.16)
	M15	Strategic agenda including roadmap – initial version (D3.2) Report on all external consultations and surveys (D2.17)
	M16	Database and dashboard with the empirical data collected in D1.4-D1.35 (and others) (D1.36) Report on the state of Language Technology in 2030 (D2.18)
	M17	Report on the final round of feedback collection (D3.3)
Project mgmt. report (D5.3) *End of the ELE project*	M18	Strategic agenda including roadmap – final version (D3.4) ELE EP/EC workshop (D4.3); ELE conference (D4.4); ELE book publication (D4.6)



ELE: Work-packages



EFNIL in the ELE Project

- Deliverable:
  - D2.8 Report from EFNIL (M14)

Progress To Date

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D1.1

Digital Language Equality (preliminary definition)

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D1.2

Report on the state of the art in Language Technology and Language-centric AI

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D2.1

Specification of the consultation process

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D3.1

Report on existing strategic documents and projects in LT/AI

Progress To Date

https://european-language-equality.eu/

EUROPEAN LANGUAGE EQUALITY

About | Strategic Agenda | Deliverables | Events | News | Consortium | Contact | ELG

About European Language Equality

Twenty-four official languages and more than 60 regional and minority languages constitute the fabric of the EU's linguistic landscape. However, language barriers still hamper communication and the free flow of information across the EU. Multilingualism is a key cultural cornerstone of Europe and signifies what it means to be and to feel European. Many studies and resolutions, as noted in the recent EP resolution "Language equality in the digital age", have found a striking imbalance in terms of support through language technologies and issue a call to action.

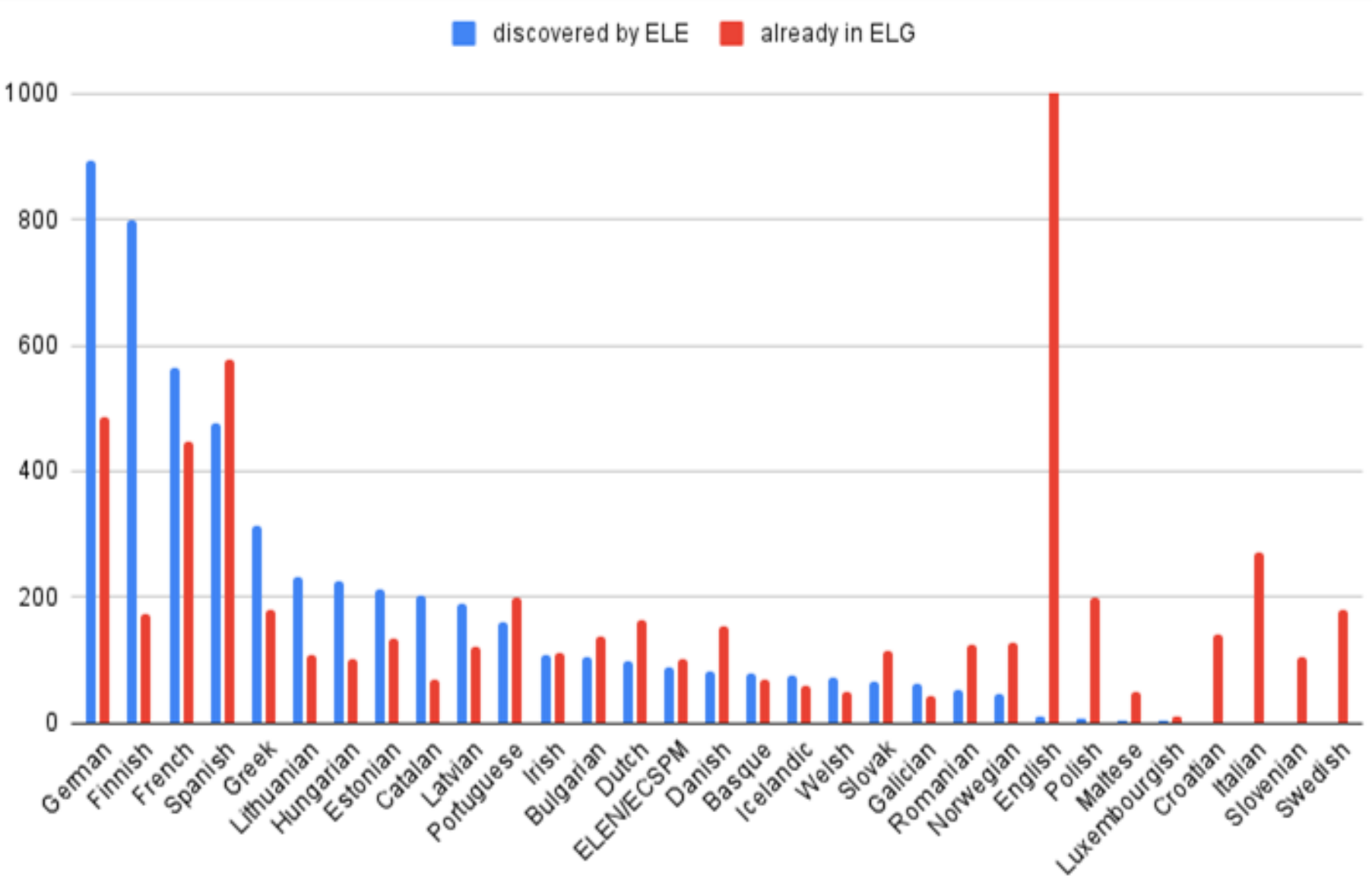
This project answers this call and lays the foundations for a strategic agenda and roadmap for making digital language equality a reality in Europe by 2030.

The primary goal of ELE is to prepare the European Language Equality Programme, in the form of a strategic research, innovation and implementation agenda and a roadmap for achieving full digital language equality in Europe by 2030. This programme will be prepared jointly with the whole European Language Technology, Computational Linguistics and language-centric AI community, as well as with representatives of relevant initiatives and associations, language communities and RML groups.

The consortium includes all relevant scientific and industrial stakeholders from all Member States and Associated Countries and engages them in the process. The whole community is included in the project through external consultation sessions. The project plan is fully optimised towards this key goal of preparing the strategic agenda and roadmap and of involving the whole European LT community.

Ensuring appropriate technology support for all European languages will create jobs, growth and opportunities in the digital single market. Equally crucial, overcoming language barriers in the digital environment is essential for an inclusive society and for providing unity in diversity for many years to come. The ELE project provides a roadmap and framework to achieve this.

Progress To Date: LR Collection (Sept 15th)



General Progress To Date

- Meetings
  - Kick-off Meeting – Jan 15th
  - Core group meetings – at least monthly
  - Internal WP meetings – weekly
  - EU Consultation –regular email/Zoom contact, plus 6-month review
  - ELE General Assemblies – Jun 11th, Sept 17th
- Project Management (grant agreement, consortium agreement …)
- Website published – end March
- WP2 Surveys finalised and circulated – end June
- Consultation groups drawn up
- Staff hires in core team
- 20+ ELE conference presentations so far

Concluding Remarks

- The ELE project started in January 2021 and ends in June 2022
- It will develop a *Strategic Research, Innovation and Implementation Agenda and a Roadmap for achieving full Digital Language Equality in Europe by 2030*
- Consortium with 52 partners covering all European countries and all major initiatives
- Many consultation events, roundtables, stakeholder meetings ongoing/planned
- Close collaboration with its sister project ELG
- Intended overlap between ELE and ELG consortium, ELG NCCs and META-NET members
- Firmly establish LT and language-centric AI in Horizon Europe and Digital Europe Programme
- Please participate in our stakeholder events, surveys and questionnaires!
- ELE and ELG will finish up with a joint META-FORUM 2022 in June 2022.

Many thanks!

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https://www.computing.dcu.ie/~away

http://www.european-language-equality.eu

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